



Syria: Crop Progress Report

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

MY 2009/10

October - November Summary

November 21, 2008

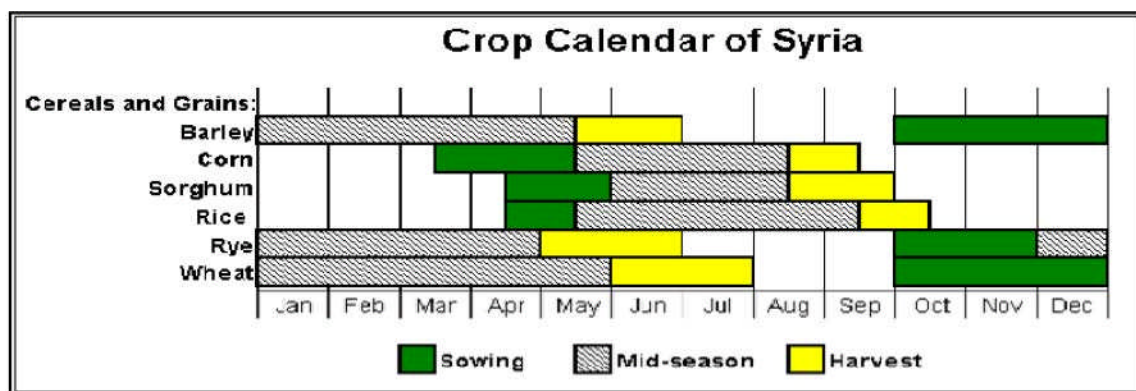
(1) The majority of small grains production in Syria occurs in the central and northeast regions of the country, with nearly 70% of all production concentrated in the Aleppo, Ar Raqqa, and Al Hasakah provinces alone (Figure 1 and 2).

(2) Drought conditions subsided with significant precipitation events occurring in the last decades of September and October. Since the start of the winter grains planting season (October) cumulative precipitation is above normal in the north and central provinces, in particular Aleppo where greater than 40% of all barley is grown. Below normal cumulative precipitation is occurring in the southwest as well as in the northeast provinces of Al Hasakah and Ar Raqqa, which account for over 50% of all wheat production and almost 25% of barley (Figure 3).

(3) Minimal precipitation occurred outside of the north and central regions of Syria during the first two decades of November. Current forecast for the region indicates that this trend is not likely to change in the following week (Figure 4). As a result the surface soil moisture that was available at the end of October has depleted from the southeast and northwest portions of the country (Figure 5). If this trend continues it could become an issue for farmers who are waiting until later in the season to plant their grain.

(4) Average temperature conditions were slightly higher (+ 3 - 5°C) than normal throughout October but have followed the seasonal average during the first two decades of November (Figure 6).

(5) The effects of drought and resulting low grain production of last year's harvest (MY 2008/09) may have continuing effects into the MY 2009/10 season. Decreased available seed for planting as a result of the poor production may limit the total area of wheat and barley cultivated. Satellite monitoring of land-area cultivation will commence in December.



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Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Agrarian Reform, Syria, 2005

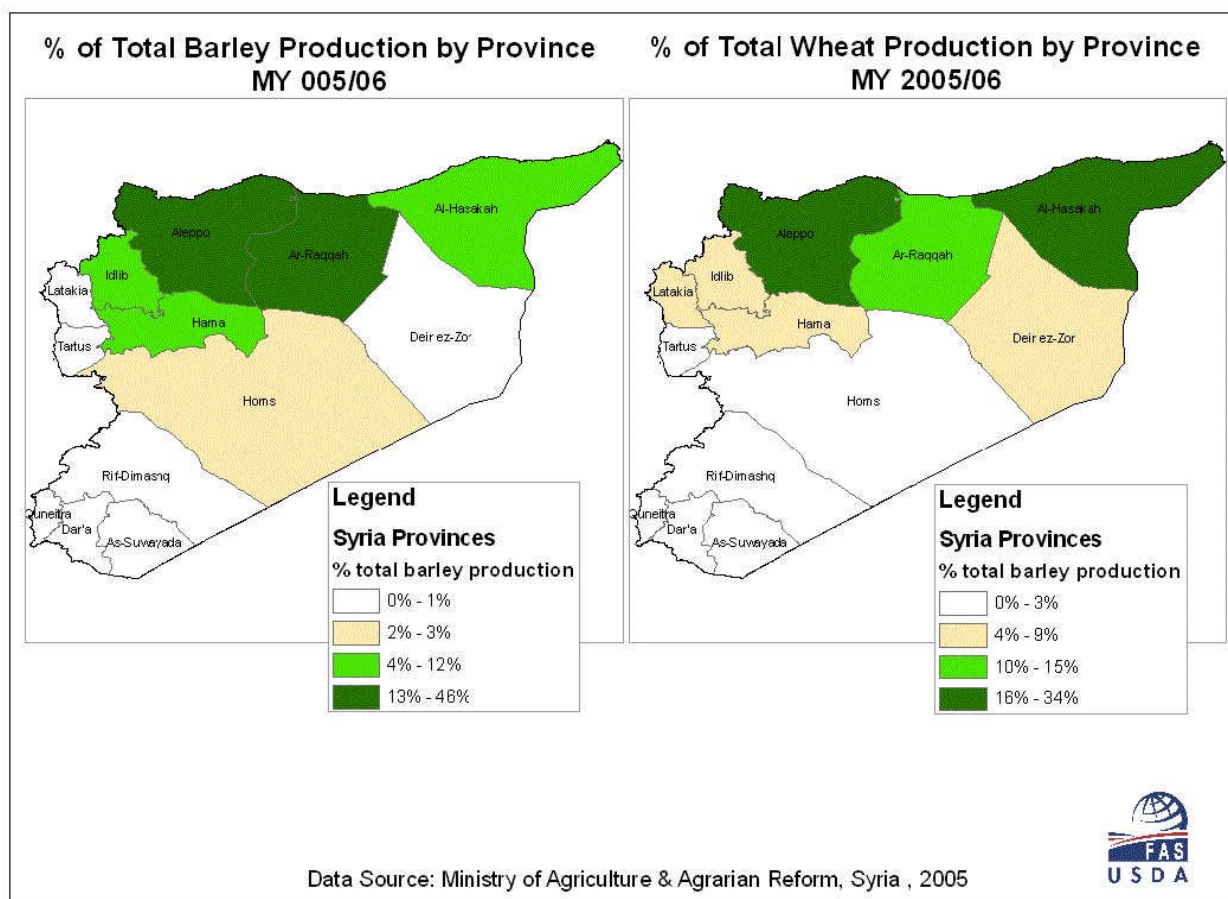


Figure 1. Breakdown by province, percent of total wheat and barley production in Syria.

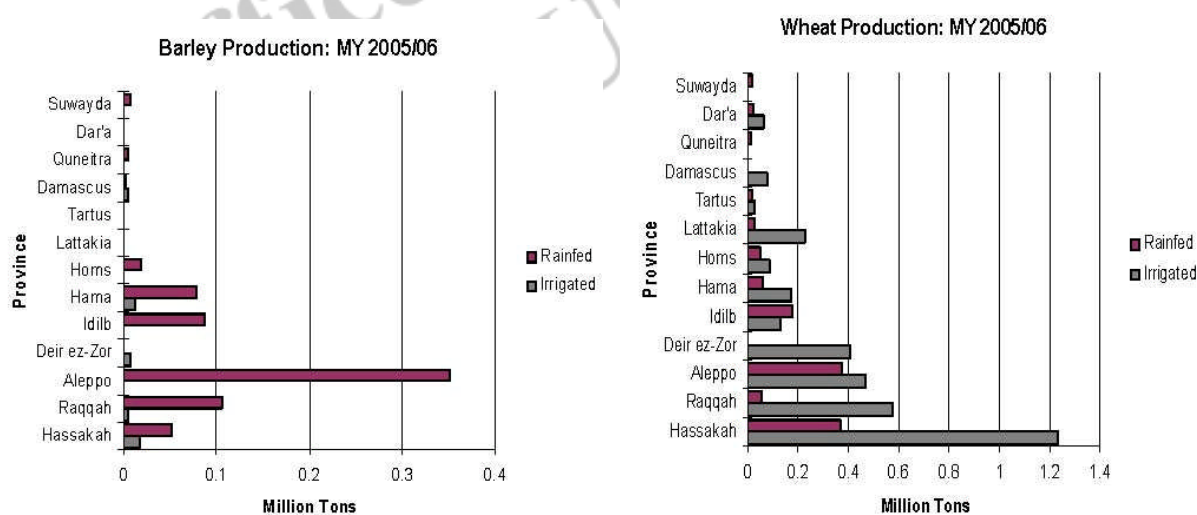


Figure 2. Wheat and barley production breakdown by province.
Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Agrarian Reform, Syria, 2005.

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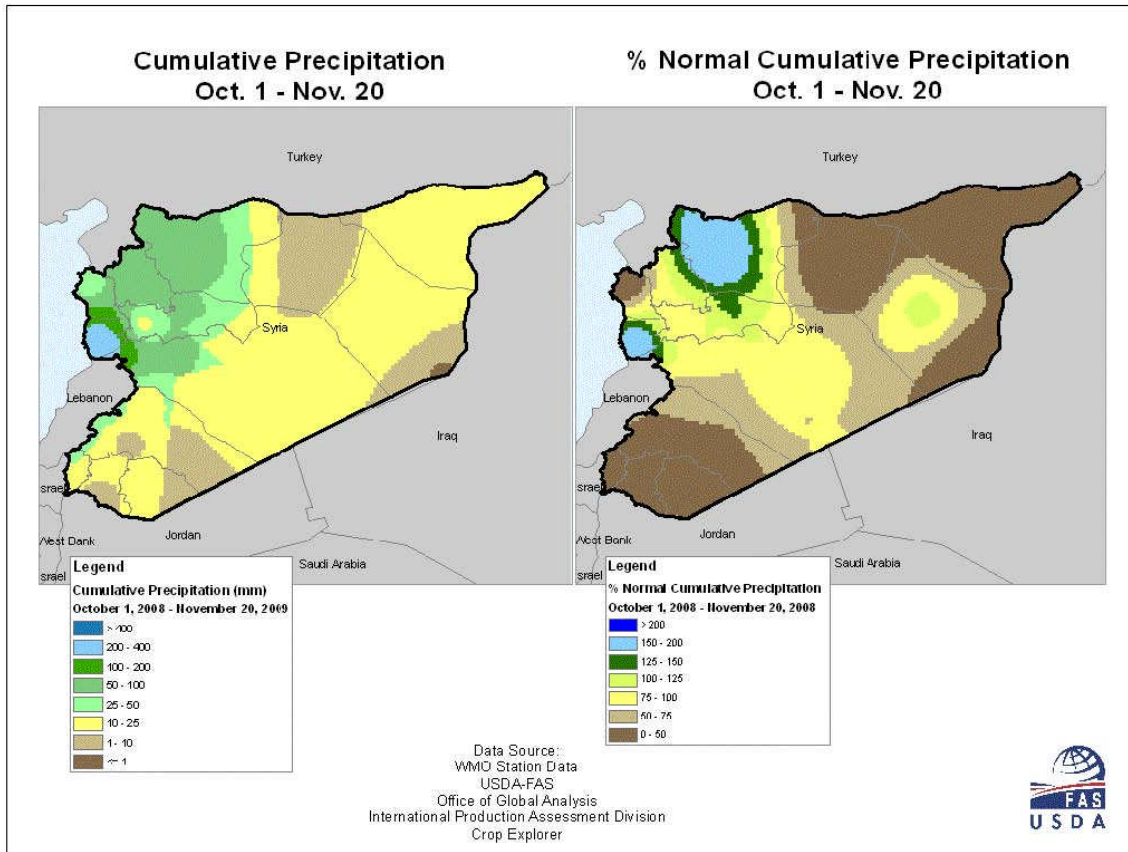


Figure 3. Cumulative precipitation and % normal cumulative precipitation.

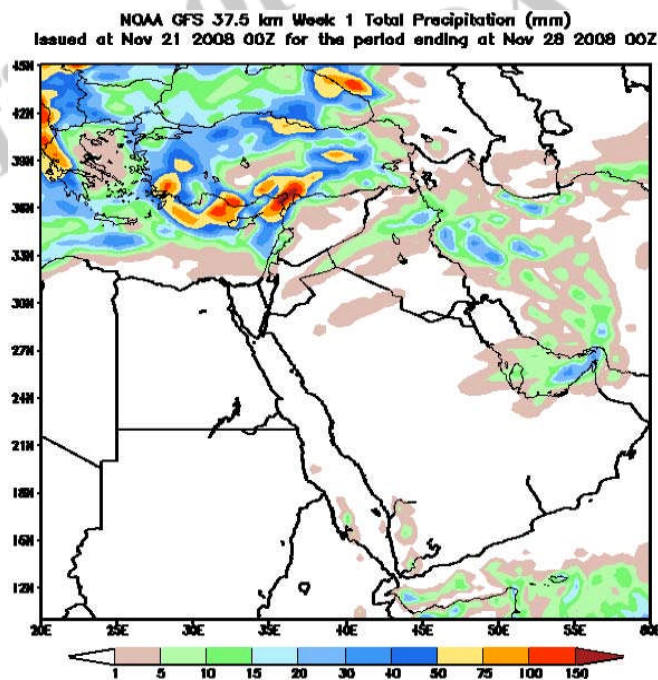


Figure 4. Nov. 21 through Nov. 28, 2008, 7-day precipitation forecast for the Middle East.
 Source: NOAA National Weather Service, Climate Prediction Center.

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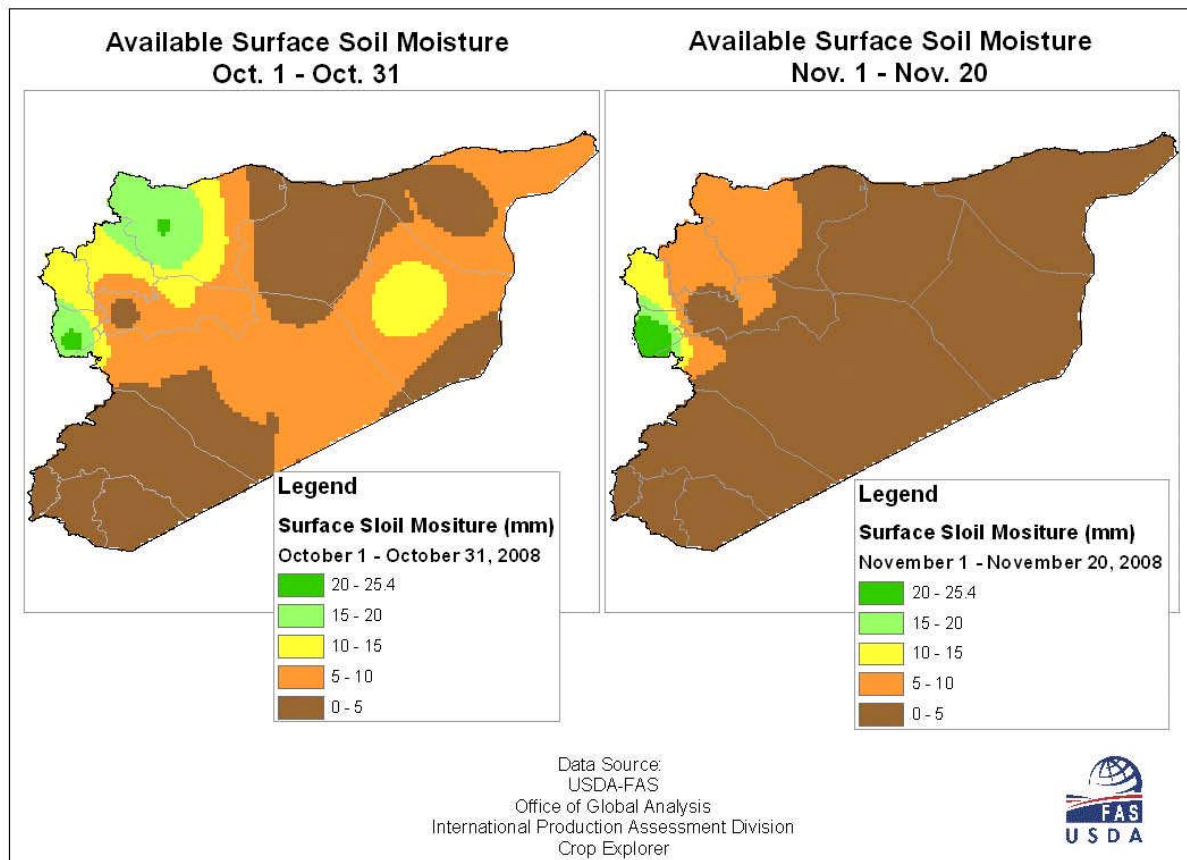


Figure 5. Comparison of available surface soil moisture at the end of October and after the first two decades of November.

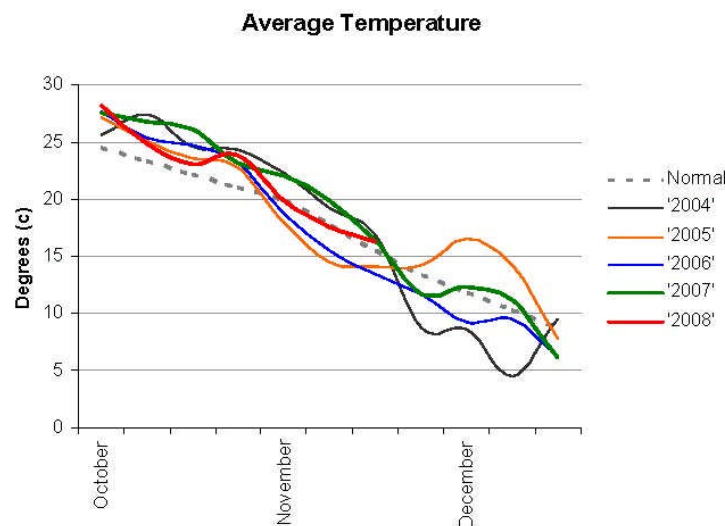


Figure 6. Five year comparison of decadal temperature averages.
 Data Source: USDA-FAS, Office of Global Analysis